

loves the Cubs. [Laughter] And yet, a flawed system is not only making it hard for him to practice medicine; it's making it hard for him to stay in an area he loves. He said, "We're all at the breaking point. Liability premiums are keeping us from doing what we love or forcing us to leave our homes."

We have got a problem in America that we must deal with. And this is not only a local problem, but because lawsuits and premium increases and preventative medicine drive up the cost in Medicaid and Medicare and veterans health benefits, medical liability is a national issue that requires a national solution.

Every person with a legitimate claim deserves a day in court. Junk lawsuits make it hard to get into court. And bad doctors must be held to account. I'm confident that's what the Illinois Medical Society believes as well. Yet, for the sake of affordable and available health care, we need a cap on non-economic damages, of \$250,000. Punitive damages should be limited to reasonable limits.

This health care system needs liability reform now. No one has ever been healed by a frivolous lawsuit. This past March, the House of Representatives passed medical liability reform. The Senate has not acted. I urge all of you to talk to your Senators. I know one of them is okay.

You can make a difference. Not only should the people of Illinois who care about medical liability reform get involved, people all over this country—if you want a health care system that is available and affordable—need to get involved. You need to let your Senators know how you feel on this key issue.

I'll be right there with you getting involved. I want to sign this into law. I want to sign Medicare reform into law, and I want to sign medical liability reform into law, so that we can look the American people in the eye and say, "We have done our job; we saw a problem and we fixed it."

There are challenges in the health care system. We understand that in Washington. And we can answer those challenges with practical, sensible, compassionate reforms. That is the charge before us, and that is the charge we must keep on behalf of the American people.

May God bless your work, and may God continue to bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:32 a.m. in the ballroom at the Chicago Hilton. In his remarks, he referred to former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; and Ronald L. Ruecker, M.D., chair, board of trustees, Illinois State Medical Society. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks in Chicago on the Terrorist Bombing in Jerusalem *June 11, 2003*

Today there was a terrible bombing in Jerusalem. I send my heartfelt condolences to those who suffered and lost life.

It is clear there are people in the Middle East who hate peace. There are people who want to kill in order to make sure that the desires of Israel to live in secure and peace don't happen, who kill to make sure

the desires of the Prime Minister of the Palestinian Authority and others of a peaceful state living side by side with Israel do not happen.

To the people in the world who want to see peace in the Middle East, I strongly urge all of you to fight off terror, to cut off money to organizations such as Hamas,

to isolate those who hate so much that they're willing to kill to stop peace from going forward. I strongly condemn the killings, and I urge and call upon all of the free world, nations which love peace, to not only condemn the killings but to use every ounce of their power to prevent them from happening in the future.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:40 a.m. in Grant Park prior to his departure from Chicago. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) of the Palestinian Authority.

Joint Statement Between the United States of America and the Kingdom of Thailand

June 11, 2003

President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra met on June 10, 2003 to reaffirm the strength and importance of the alliance between the United States and the Kingdom of Thailand, built upon 170 years of close and warm relationship between both the two nations. In recognition of that long history of cooperation, the President informed the Prime Minister that the United States is actively considering Thailand's designation as a Major Non NATO Ally (MNNA).

The two leaders discussed developments in Iraq and reaffirmed their shared commitment to help build a stable, prosperous, and democratic Iraq. President Bush welcomed Thailand's offer to deploy a military engineering battalion and medical teams to Iraq, and expressed appreciation for the humanitarian assistance that Thailand has already extended to the Iraqi people. The President further welcomed Thailand's successful deployment of an engineering battalion working with the Coalition in Afghanistan, noting that such cooperation highlights the continued vitality of the U.S.-Thai alliance.

Both leaders agreed that a lasting peace in the Middle East is of vital interest to the international community. In this regard, Prime Minister Thaksin expressed his appreciation for the personal involvement by President Bush to secure a comprehensive

road map for sustainable peace and security in the region.

President Bush and Prime Minister Thaksin expressed concern about the situation on the Korean Peninsula. They reaffirmed their commitment to work with other states in Asia to achieve the complete, verifiable, and irreversible elimination of North Korea's nuclear weapons program, as is necessary for stability, peace, and security in the region. The President and the Prime Minister expressed concern for the people of North Korea and agreed on the importance of humanitarian food assistance and efforts to ensure that it gets to those who need it.

President Bush and Prime Minister Thaksin expressed deep concern over recent developments in Burma, in particular the violence that occurred on May 30, 2003. The two leaders agreed on the need for the immediate release of Aung San Suu Kyi and other National League for Democracy (NLD) members. Prime Minister Thaksin affirmed the Thai Government's readiness to do whatever possible to facilitate Burmese national reconciliation and the return to democracy. Noting that a democratic and prosperous Burma is important to the stability and prosperity of Southeast Asia, President Bush and Prime Minister Thaksin called for an immediate